



LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY BANDS OF ODAWA INDIANS  
7500 ODAWA CIRCLE, HARBOR SPRINGS, MI 49740

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TRIBAL COUNCIL TRAVEL REPORT NARRATIVE

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**From:** Regina Gasco Bentley

**Date:** August 16-18, 2011

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**Re: Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes**

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Mr. Joe A. Garcia Owingeh started the meeting with prayer and talk about our native ways.

It's about us. Who we are, and how we got here. It's about the power of the creator. "We have so many issues before us, how can we concentrate? Why are we worried about even doing something other than what we've been doing?"

Mr. Garcia explained how something IS driving us. There was an exercise we did, where we closed our eyes- and pictured a world. It was Full of trees bearing fruit, healthy land. Then our children, happy, healthy, and innocent. The children were singing, and speaking, in their native language. In this world everyone was friendly. That is something to work towards for our future. Mr. Garcia explained how that is HIS driving force.

- What you long for, needs to be powerful enough, important enough to you, to be that driving force.

"What is the purpose of a government?"

- The purpose of a government is to provide for the well being and the safety of its people.
  - That is OUR job as a tribal government. To build something for the people, and on behalf of the people. We need to go back to that- get away from politics.
  - When we have lost the process of doing something for our people- we are no longer being driven by our original motivating force.

- Why are we the way we are?
  - Are you happy with the way things are?
    - If you aren't, what are you going to do about it? How are you going to change it?
- Change is driven by urgency. Urgency means there is something drastically wrong. This means that we must do something to change how things are.
  - We need to fix our own issues, and break the habit of depending on others to do it.
  - The answers lay within our communities. Go to your elders, listen to them.
  - Don't forget the little ones. The innocence of children creates simple and obvious solutions. Listen to them.
  - We have to be following our own beliefs. We need to stick with our own standards. -Once we're behind, we have to work to catch up.
- How are you going to learn, and still keep up with what is being taught now?
  - The ways of keeping us going, should be incorporated with our culture, and ways of living- and thinking.
    - Even in our diverse world, and our diverse cultures, we still stand divided-How?
    - We all consist of similar qualities. We all bleed red, all have a heart and soul.
    - We need to do it every day...find your inner soul and spirit. That is what drives us in Indian Country.
    - Tell yourself I can and then help me do it.

President Jefferson Keel from National Congress of American Indians gave an update on issues that they are working on. Also reminded tribes how important it is to work together to accomplish our goals.

Mr. Todd Kennedy talked about the BIA roads and informed the tribes that in September funding should be available.

During dinner Tim Belisle gave a presentation on Cyber Poker Tours I will forward the information to the Gaming Authority Board to give the General Manager of the casino.

Mr. Links from C&B gave a presentation on insurance benefits for the tribes. A discussion was held on Sovereign immunity and insurance companies. We have a resolution on how much money our insurance company can be sued up to before they are protected under sovereign immunity.

Mr. Kevin Fitzgibbon from HUD informed us that because of the economy that money will be getting tight and that we should make sure that we follow all the guide lines properly when using the monies. The US Government is going to be getting stricter on them. Also they will be monitoring each one to make sure that there is not a lot of unspent money carried over for a long period of time. If you have to much carry over then you could possibly loose part of your money next year.

Mr. Brian Pierson from Godfrey & Kahn gave update on national legal issues.

Elections were held: President-Michele Stanley, Vice President-Marvin Defoe, Secretary-Robert Two Bears, and Treasurer- Eugene "Ribs" Whitebird.

Miigwech for the council allowing me to attend this conference.

